

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 299

By Finney L

A RESOLUTION to honor and commemorate "Dwarfism Awareness Month" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, dwarfism is a condition characterized by short stature, meaning an adult height of four feet, ten inches or less; and

WHEREAS, dwarfism can be caused by any one of more than 200 conditions, most of which are genetic; the most common type, accounting for 70 percent of all cases of short stature, is called "achondroplasia"; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 30,000 people in the United States and 651,000 worldwide have a type of dwarfism; and

WHEREAS, dwarfism can and most often does occur in families where both parents are of average height. In fact, 85 percent of children with achondroplasia are born to average-sized parents; and

WHEREAS, dwarfism is neither an intellectual disability nor a disease in need of a cure. Like their average-sized peers, the majority of persons with dwarfism are of normal intelligence, who lead long and fulfilling lives; and

WHEREAS, because dwarfism is relatively uncommon, people with dwarfism often encounter discrimination and the portrayal of people with dwarfism in the media often resorts to stereotypes; and

WHEREAS, children with dwarfism may be particularly vulnerable to teasing and ridicule from classmates, resulting in feelings of isolation from their peers; and

WHEREAS, organizations representing people with dwarfism are leading efforts to fight discrimination and negative portrayals and to promote preferable terminology such as "little person" rather than "midget" or other inappropriate and offensive language; and

WHEREAS, family support, social networks, adaptive products and modifications, and improved public awareness also enable people with dwarfism to address discrimination and overcome other challenges in education, work, and social settings; and

WHEREAS, Little People of America, a national support organization for people with dwarfism and their families, has approximately 6,500 members throughout the United States, with seventy chapters active in all fifty states; and

WHEREAS, in addition to support, Little People of America provides education, educational scholarships, and community outreach for the benefit of people with dwarfism; and

WHEREAS, in order to raise positive awareness and increase opportunities for people with dwarfism, Little People of America has declared October to be "National Dwarfism Awareness Month"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby join with the citizens of our great State as they commemorate "Dwarfism Awareness Month" in Tennessee during the month of October 2013.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.